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Berger

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(54) **PROJECTILE DELIVERY SYSTEM WITH VARIABLE VELOCITY CONTROL**

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F41B 11/723 (2013.01)
F41B 11/60 (2013.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***F41B 11/723*** (2013.01); ***F41B 11/54*** (2013.01); ***F41B 11/60*** (2013.01); ***F41B 11/62*** (2013.01); ***F41B 11/724*** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC F41B 11/62; F41B 11/00; F41B 11/55; F41B 11/54; F41B 11/60; F41B 11/68;
(Continued)

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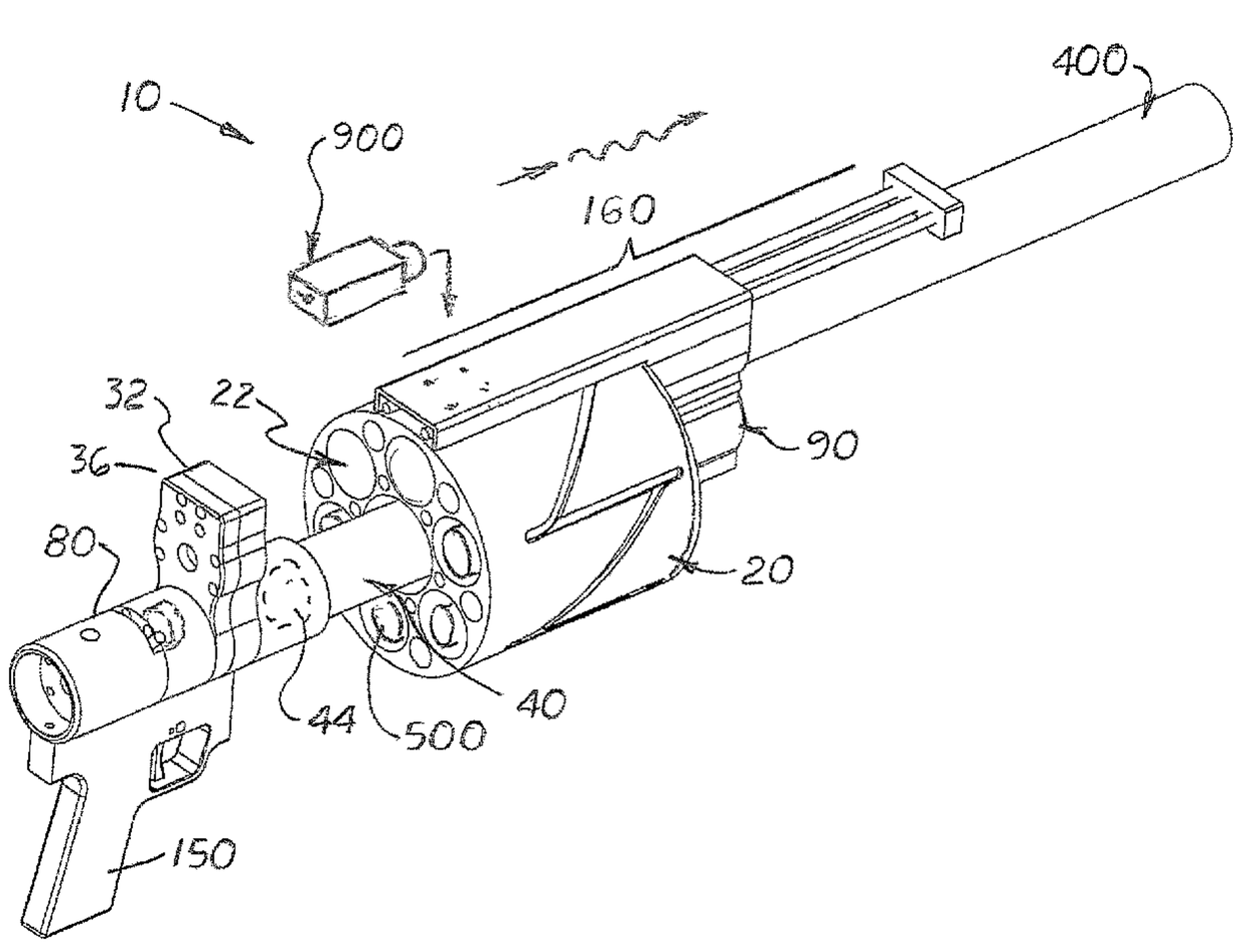
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Dean A Craine

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A variable velocity pneumatic launcher including at least one chamber filled with a projectile. The launcher includes a ballast chamber filled with pressurized air released to propel a projectile from the launcher's barrel. The launcher includes a firing chamber filled with ambient air and a ballast chamber filled with pressurized air. A piston rod extends between the chambers and attaches to a firing piston and a ballast piston inside the firing chamber and ballast chamber, respectively. The rod is connected to a velocity valve which controls the rod's longitudinal movement. When the trigger is activated, pressurized air from the ballast chamber is delivered to the firing chamber. Because the surface area of the firing piston is greater than the ballast piston's surface area, the force exerted on the firing piston is sufficient to displace the ballast piston and allow pressurize air to be released into the upper chamber containing the projectile.

18 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets



(51) **Int. Cl.**
F41B 11/724 (2013.01)
F41B 11/54 (2013.01)
F41B 11/62 (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC F41B 11/723; F41B 11/64; F41B 11/50; F41B 11/724
See application file for complete search history.

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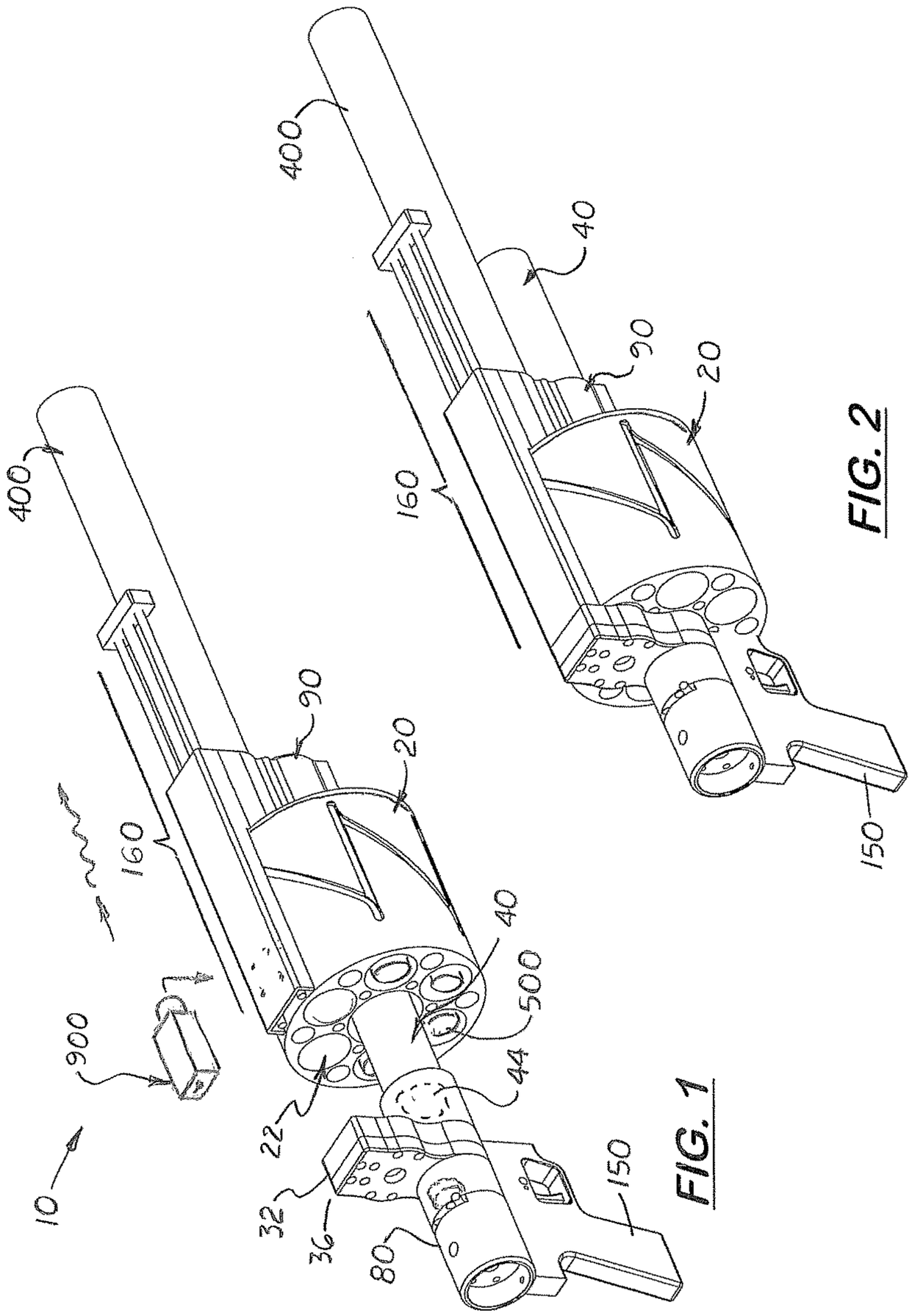

FIG. 2

FIG. 1

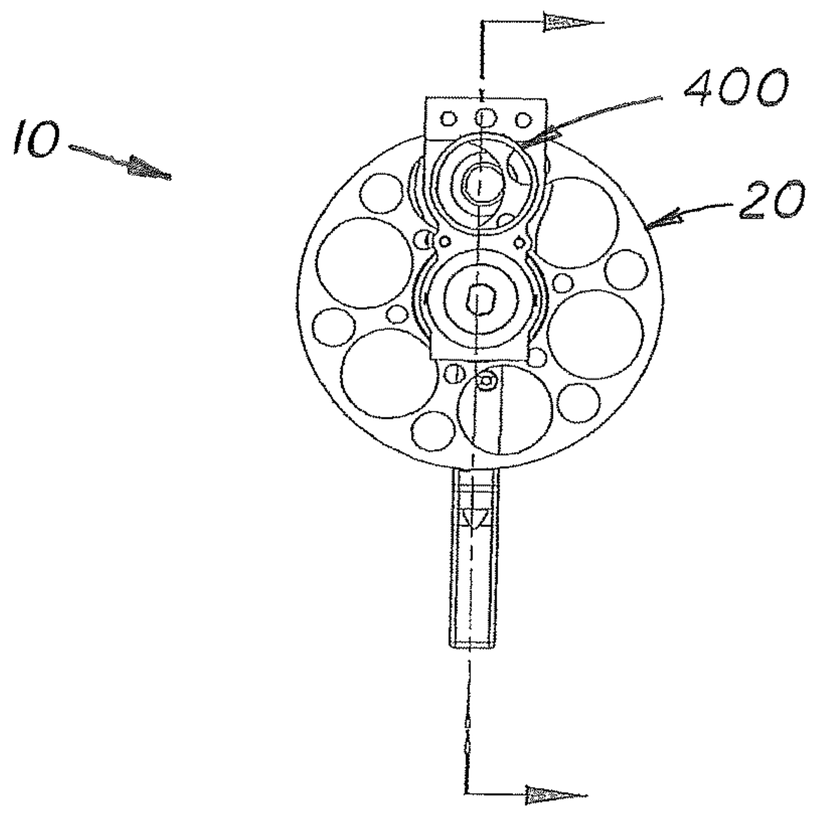

FIG. 3

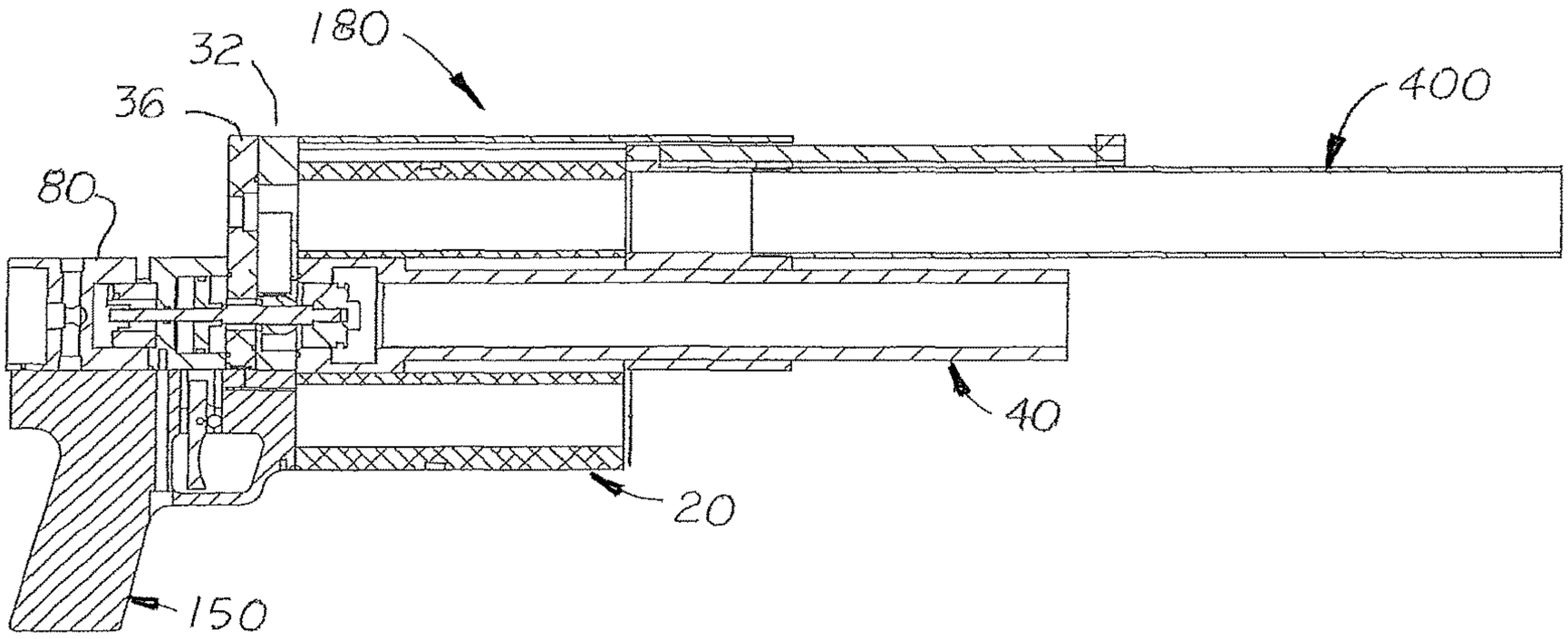

FIG. 4

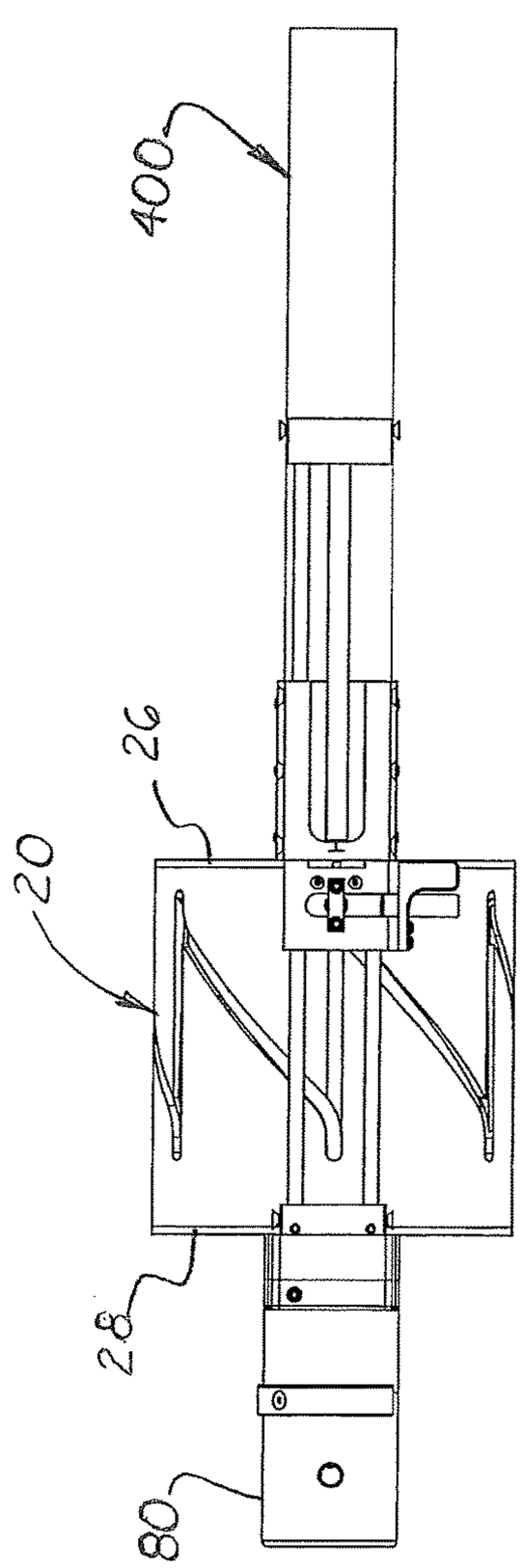

FIG. 5

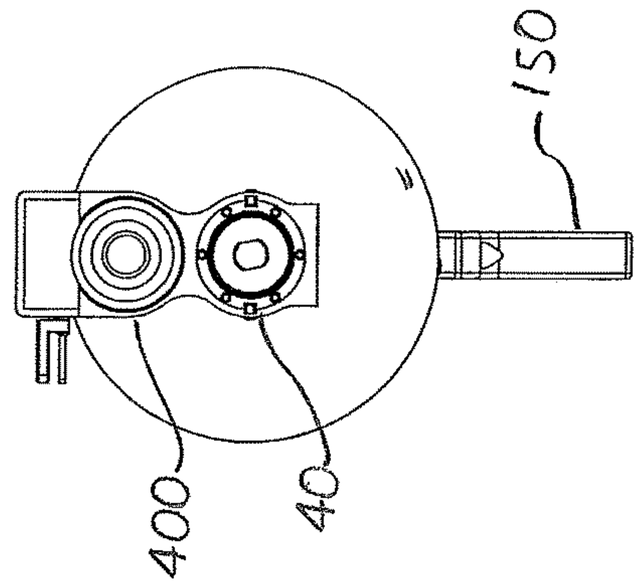

FIG. 7

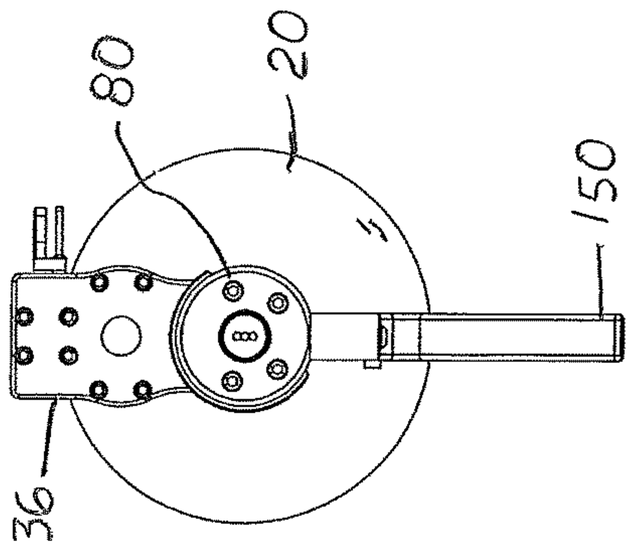

FIG. 6

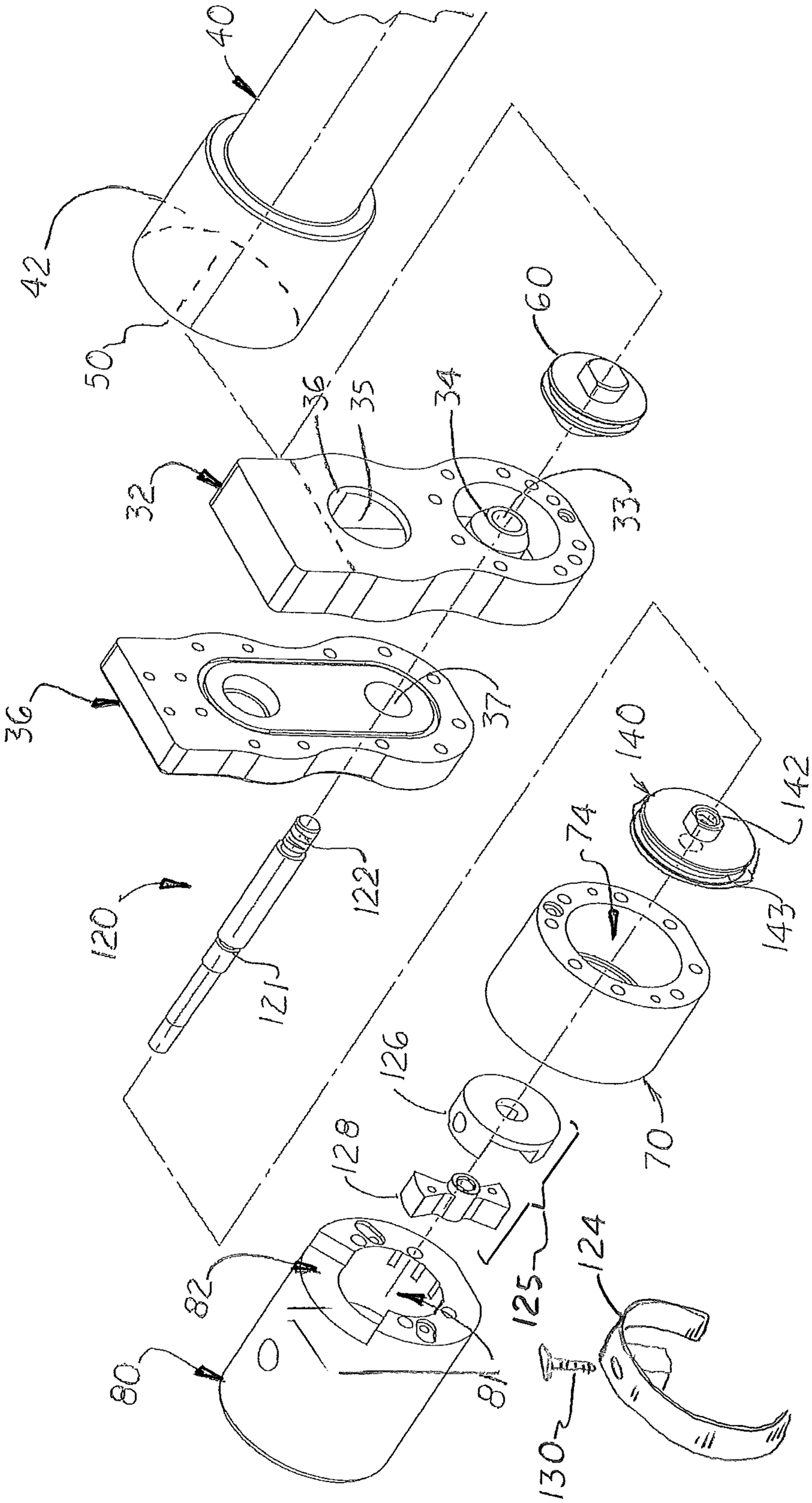
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FIG. 8

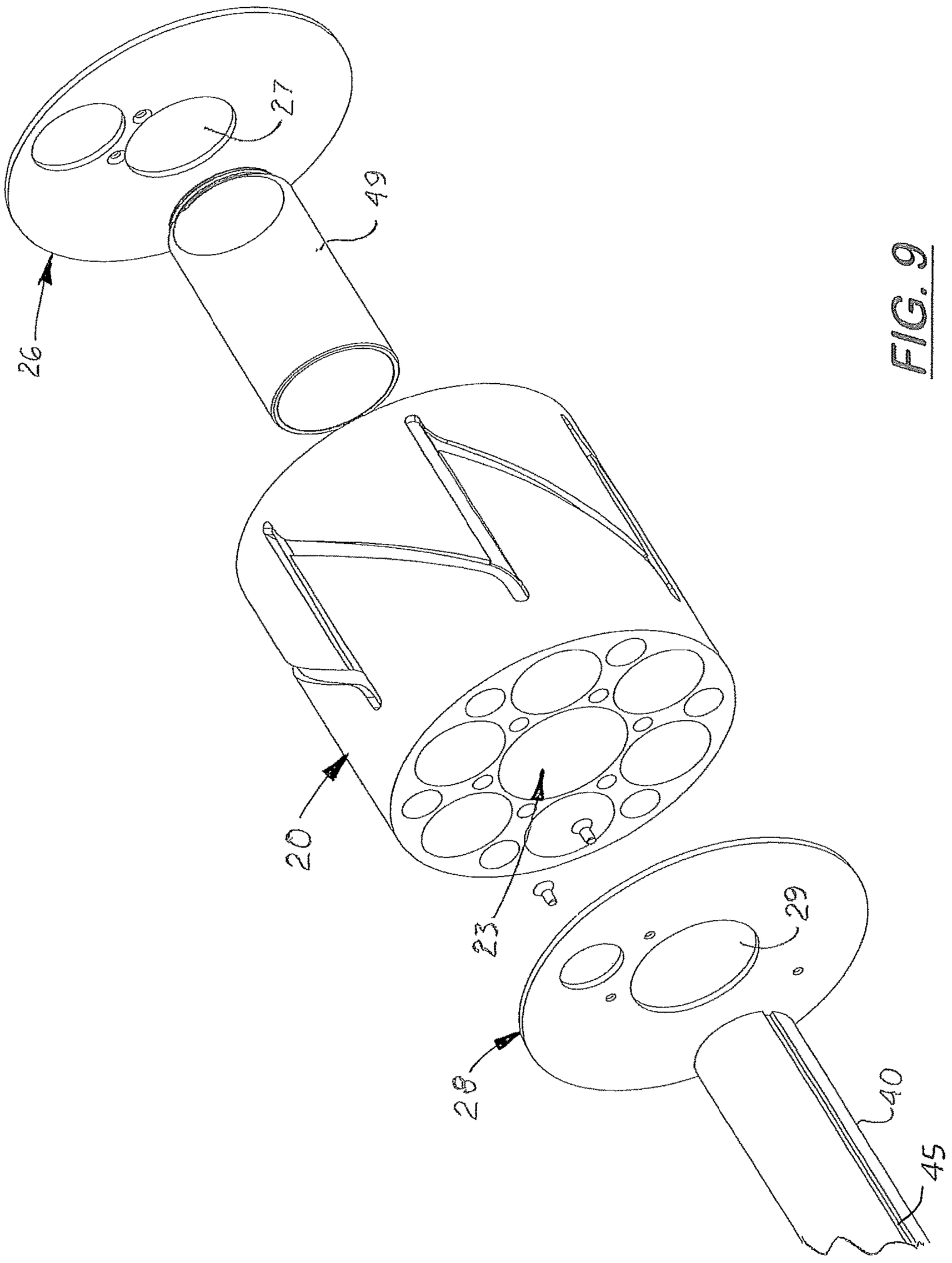

FIG. 9

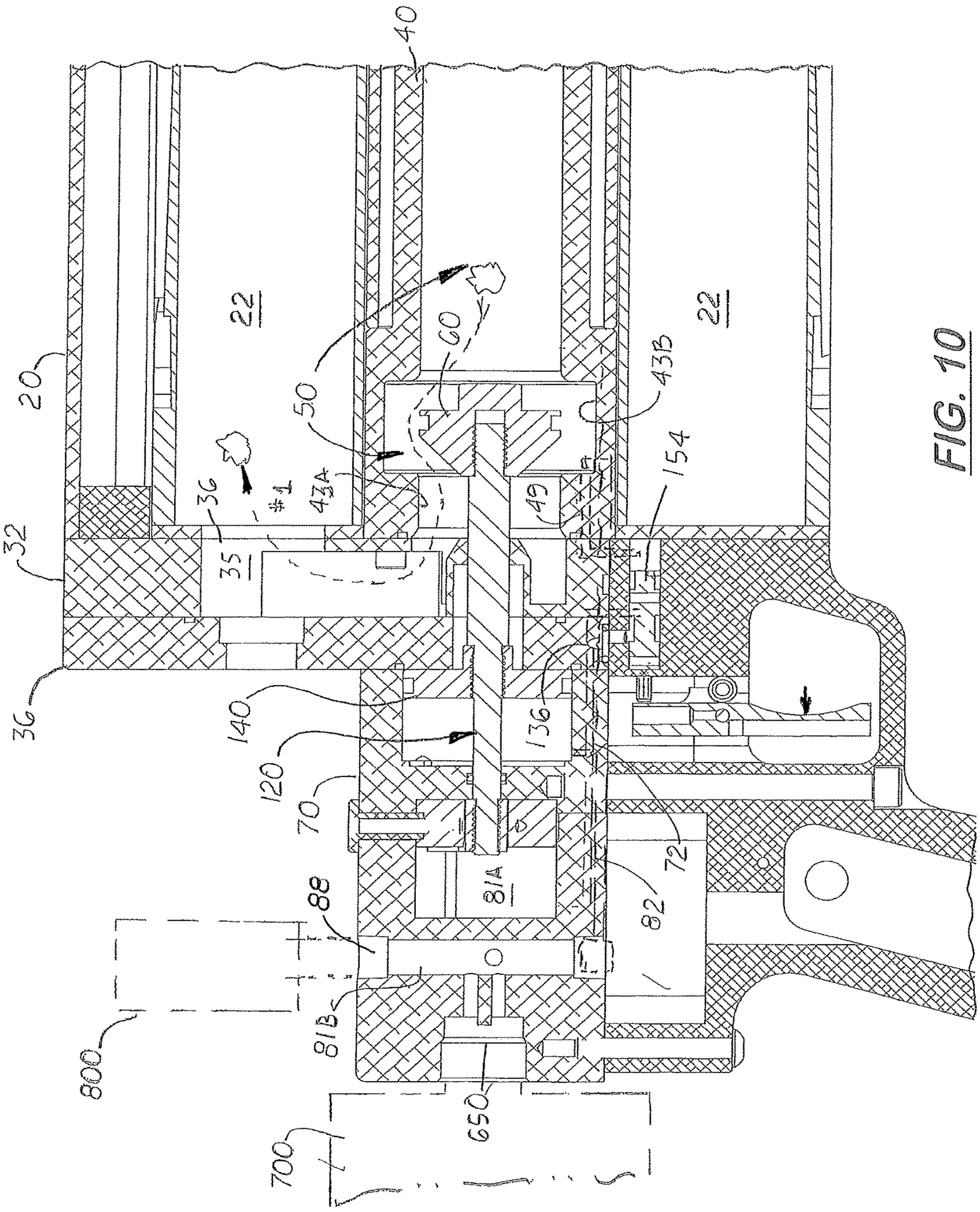
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FIG. 10

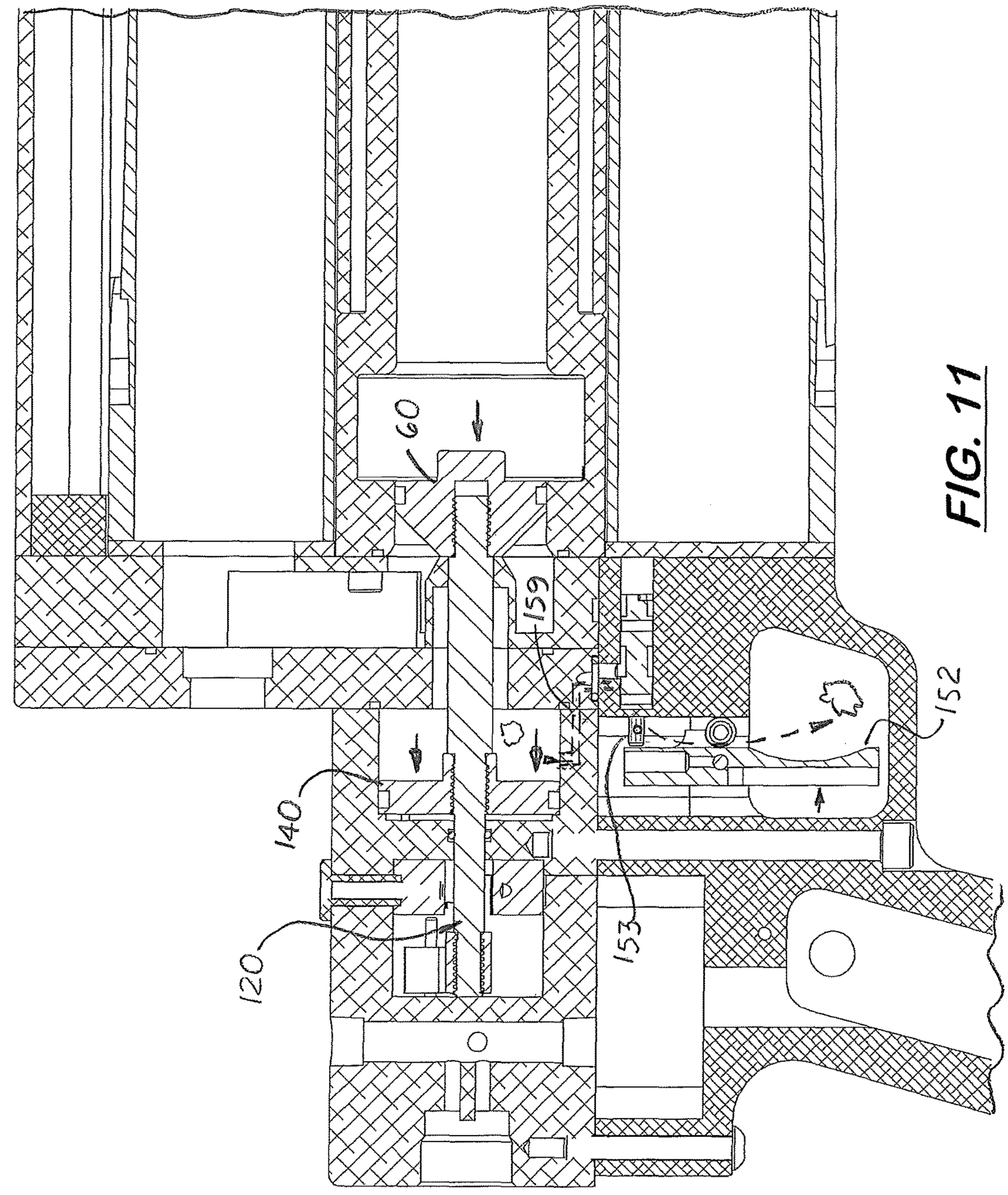

FIG. 11

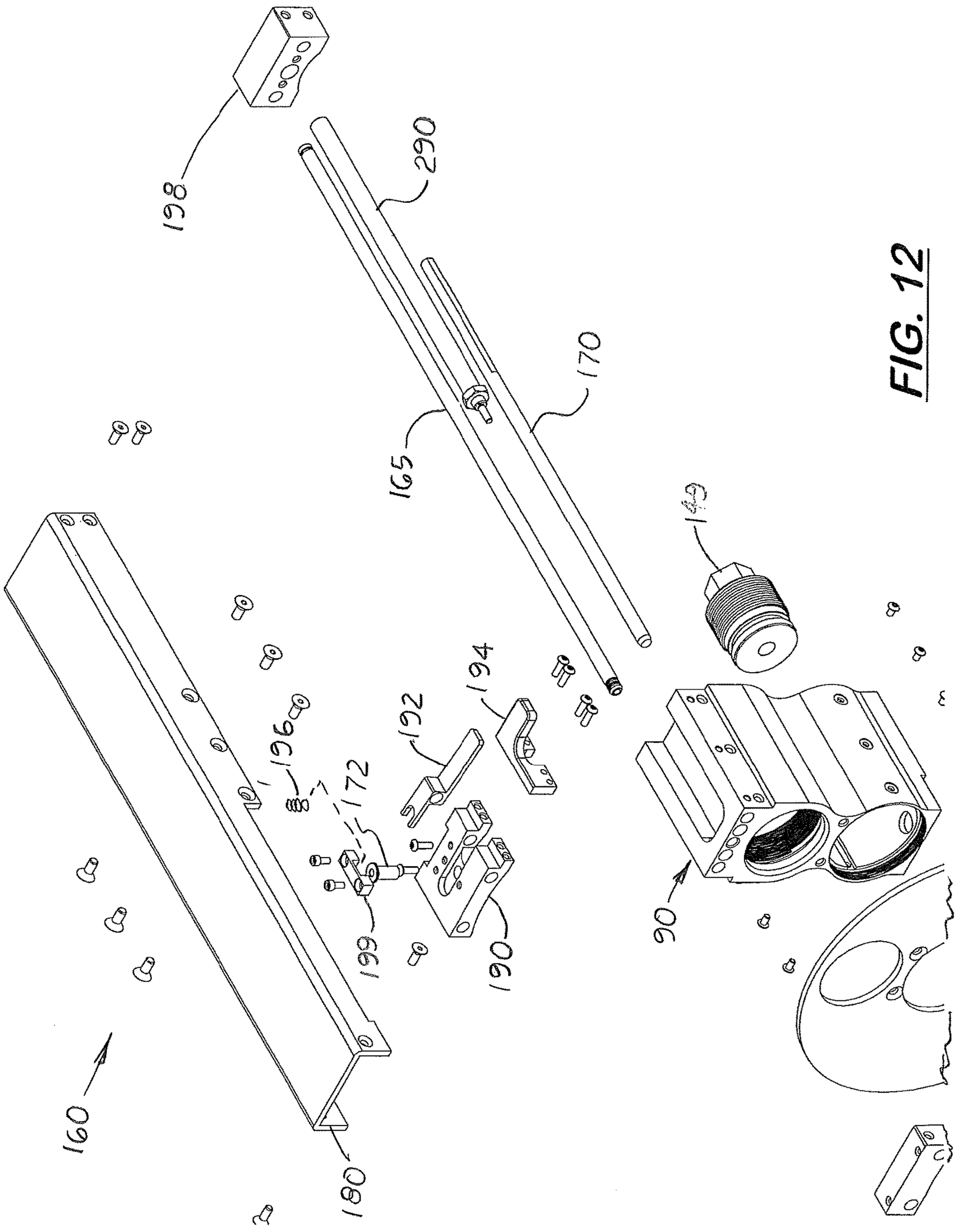

FIG. 12

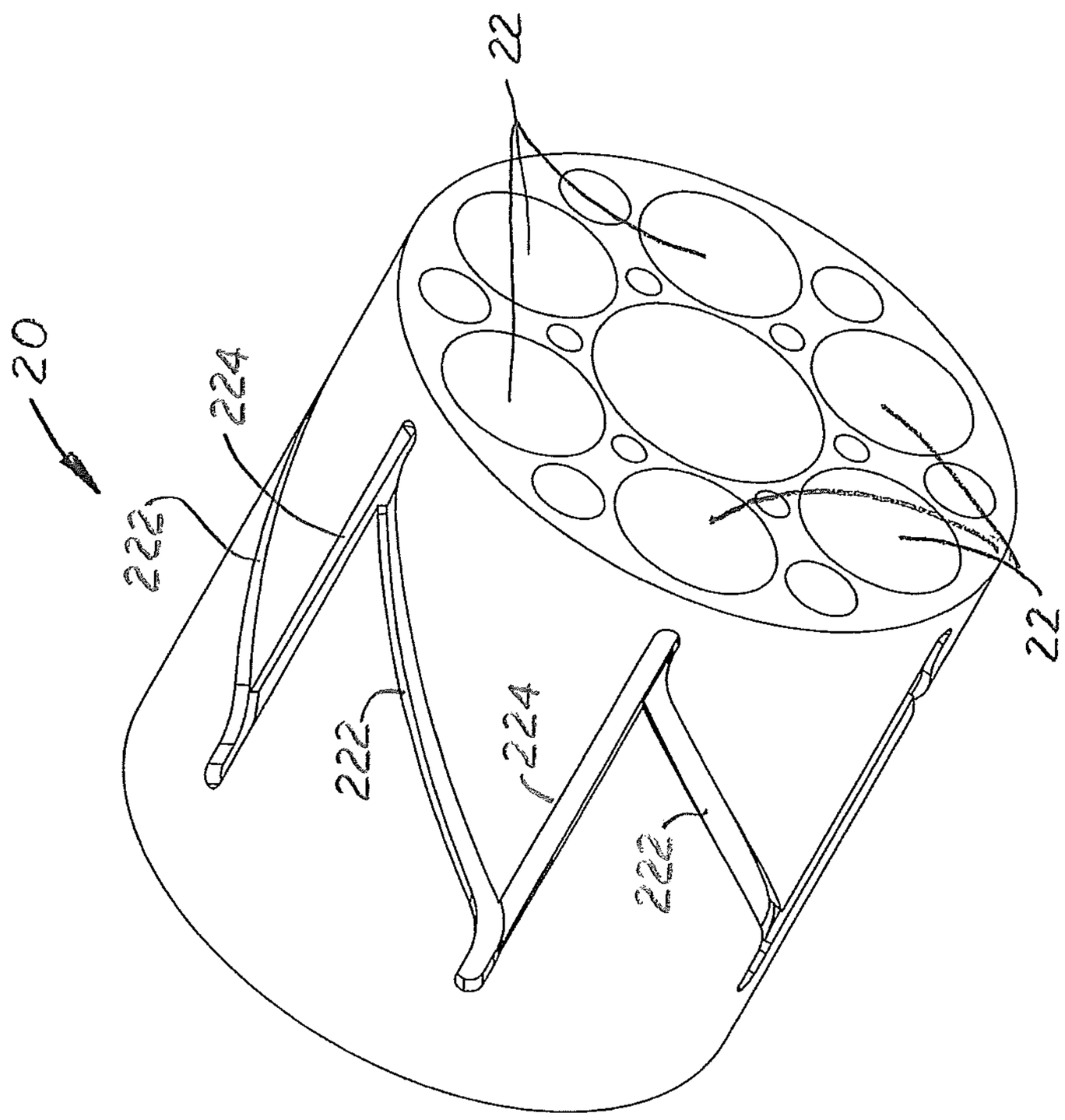

FIG. 13

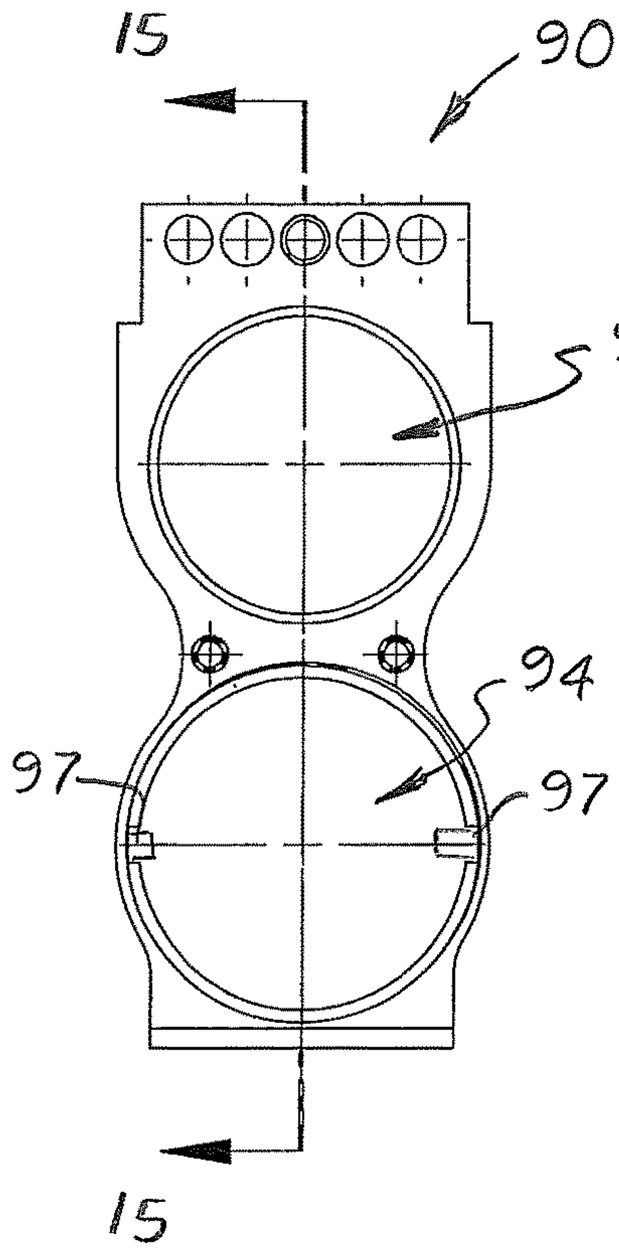

FIG. 14

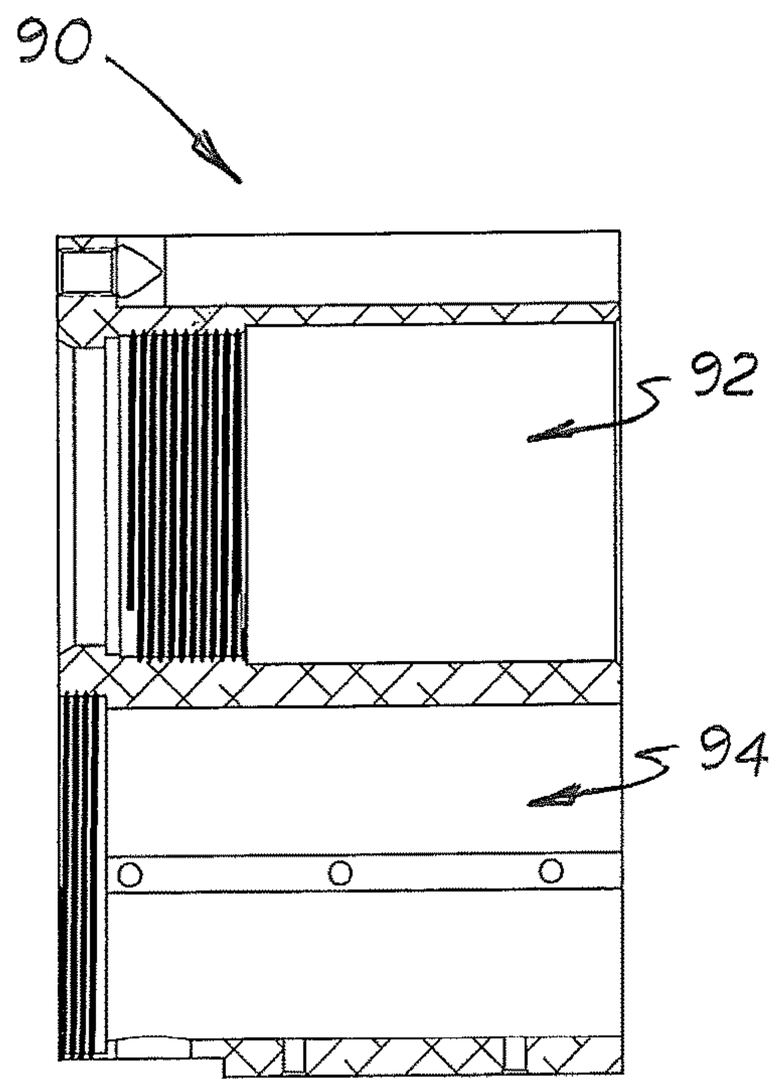

FIG. 15

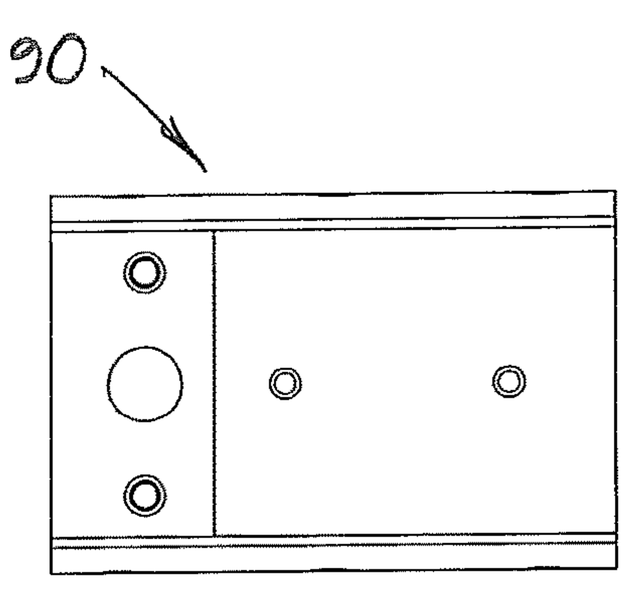

FIG. 16

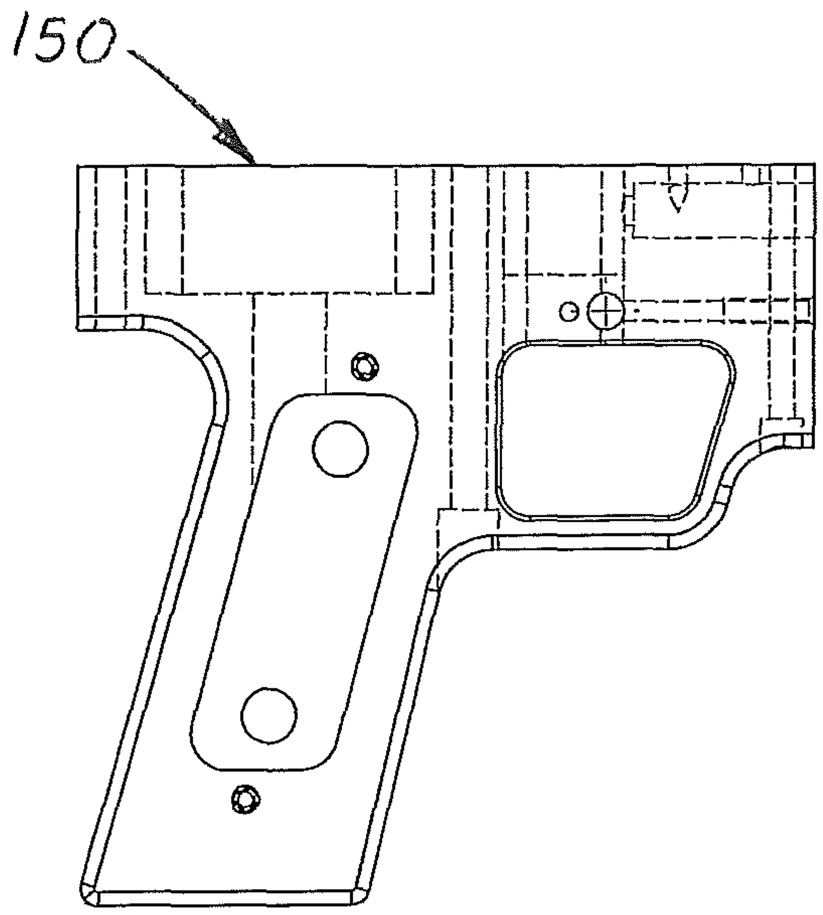

FIG. 17

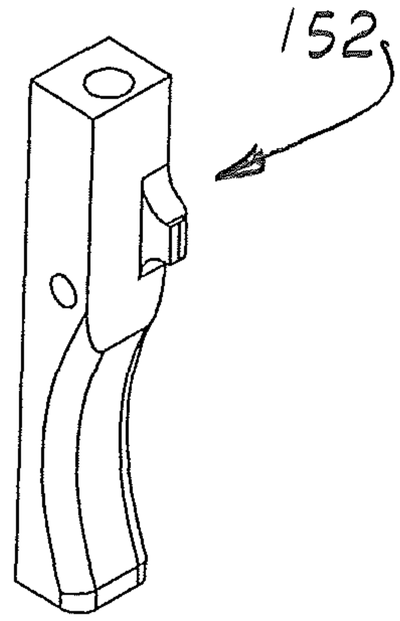

FIG. 18

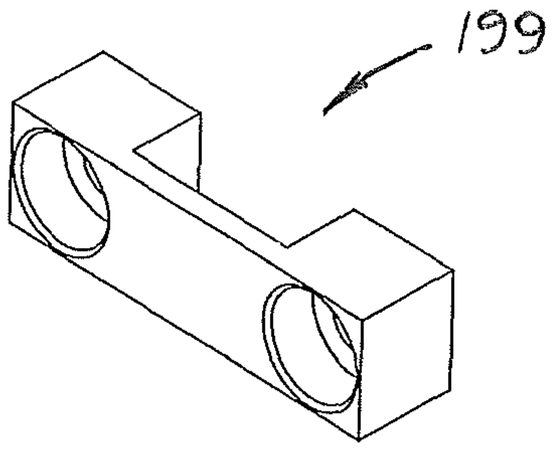

FIG. 19

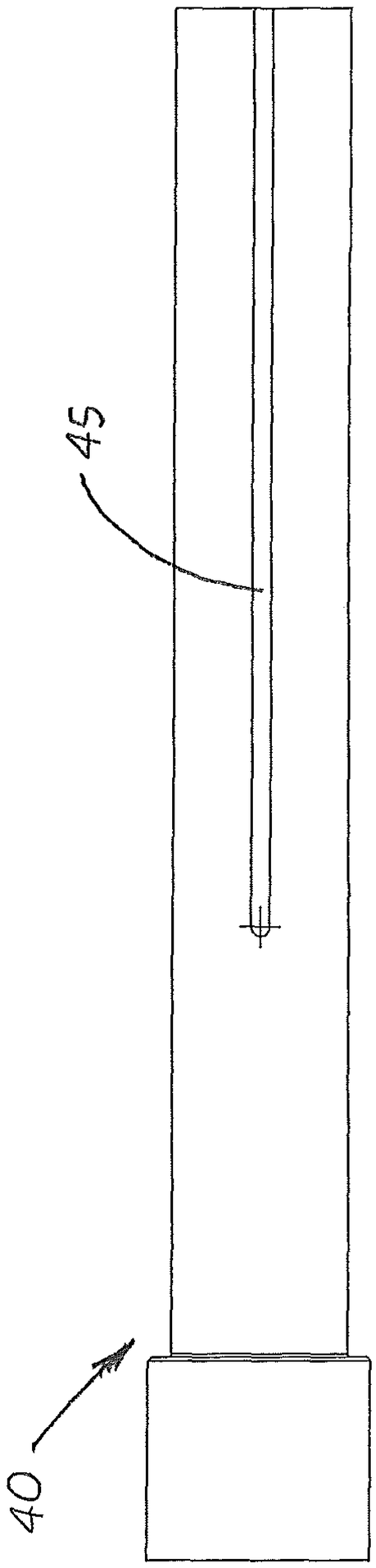

FIG. 20

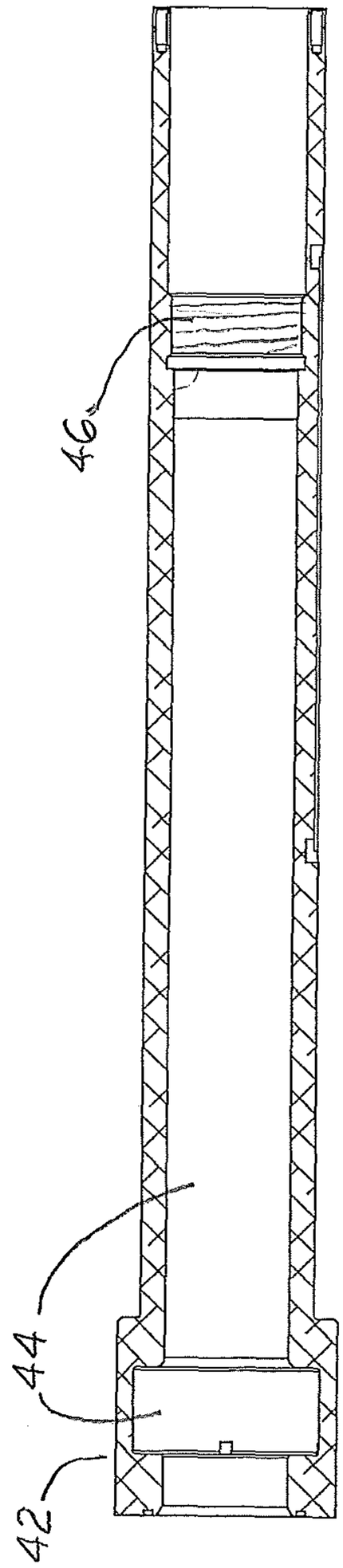

FIG. 21

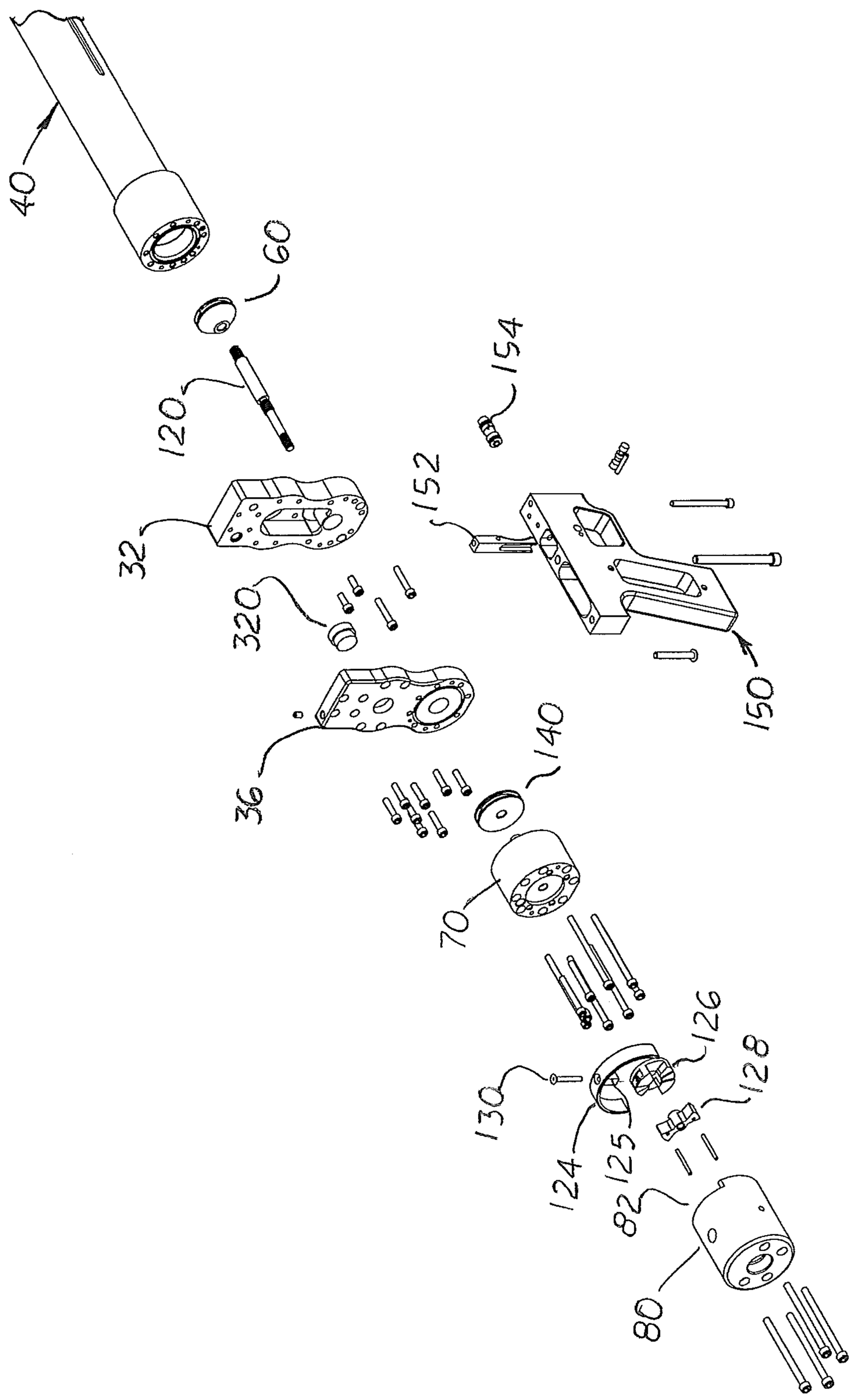

FIG. 22

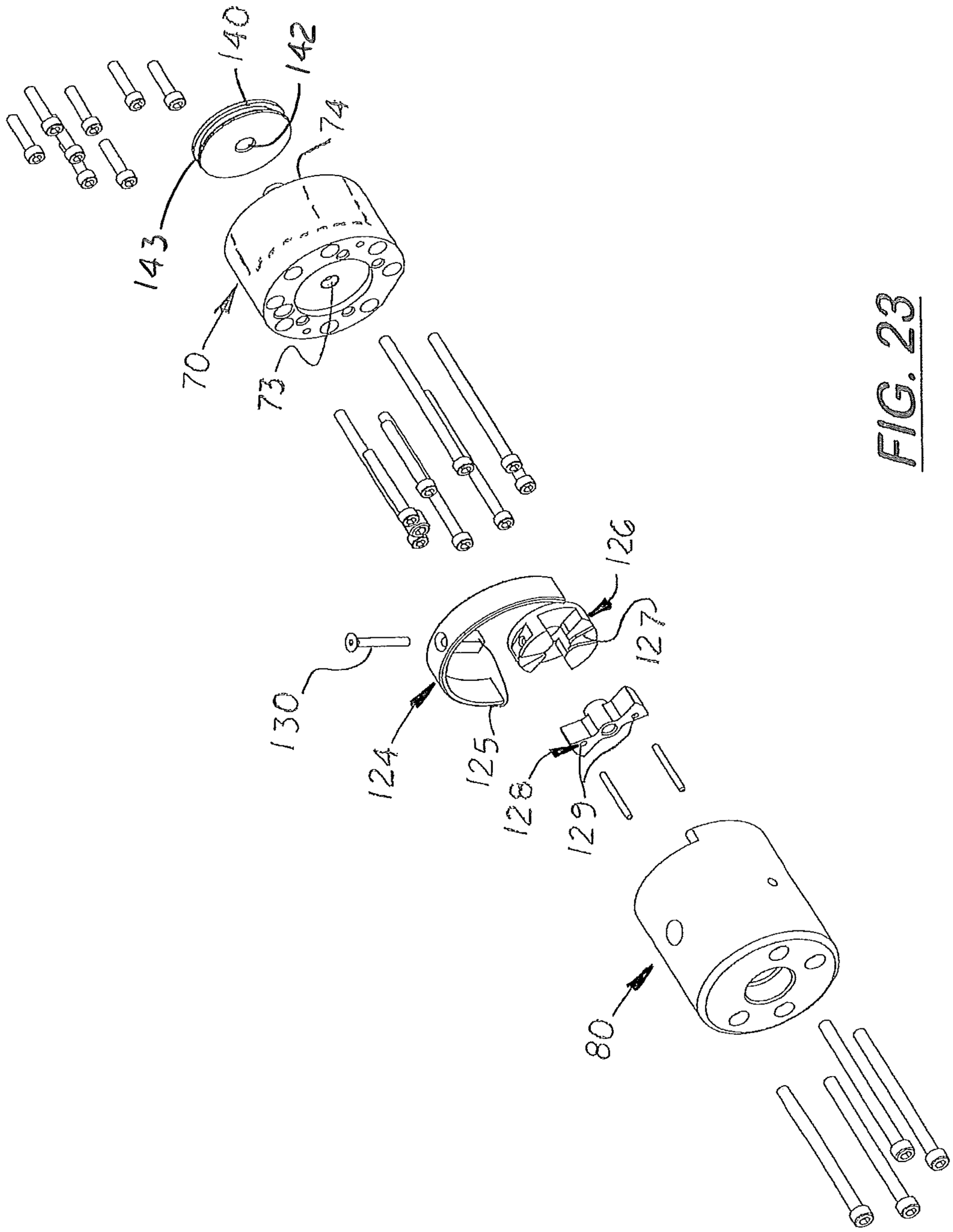

FIG. 23

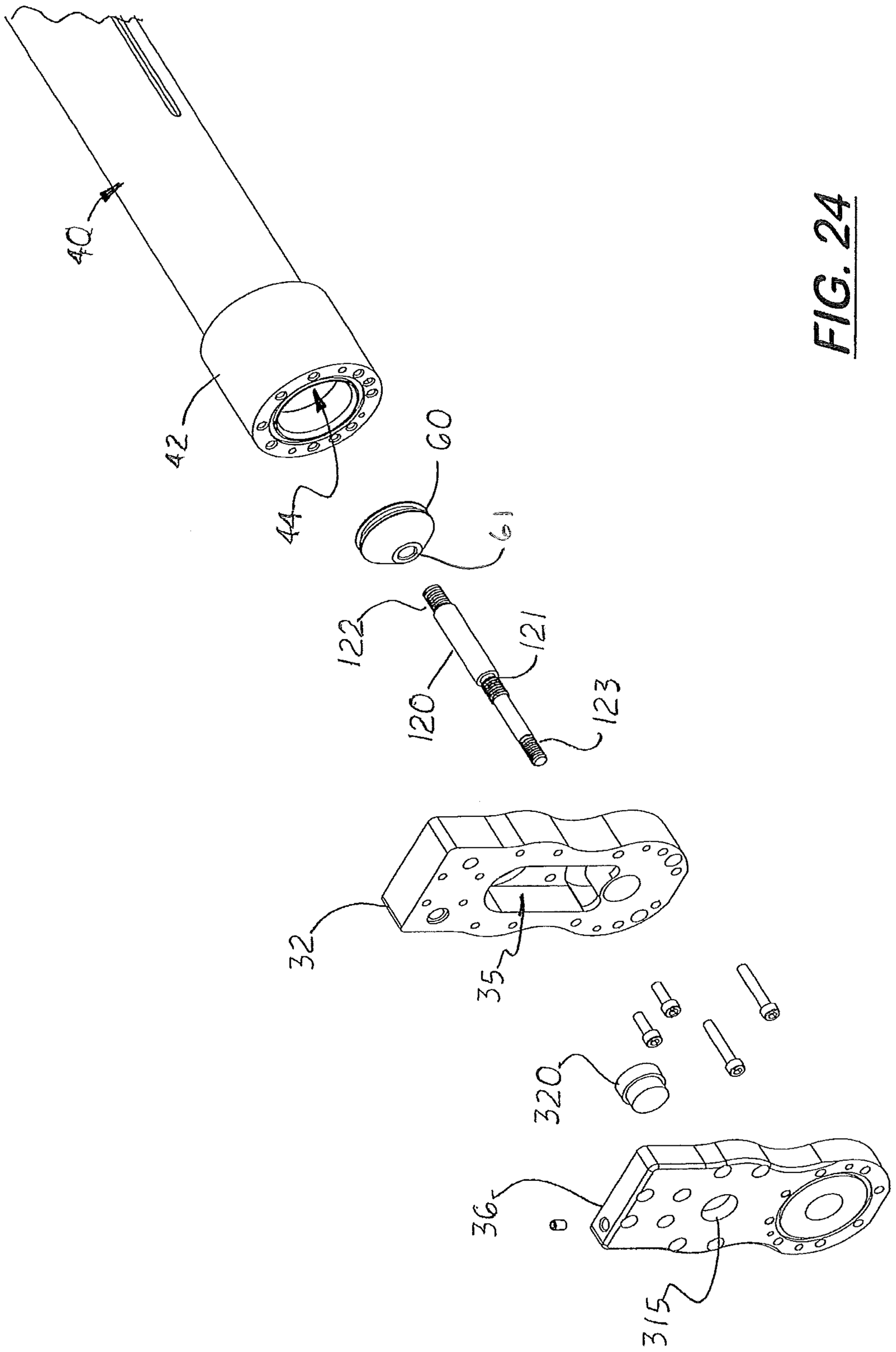

FIG. 24

PROJECTILE DELIVERY SYSTEM WITH VARIABLE VELOCITY CONTROL

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention pertains to a pneumatic launcher.

BACKGROUND ART

Non-lethal launchers, both pneumatic and gun powder-based, are used to shoot projectiles such as tear gas cartridges, pepper spray cartridges, stun ammo or smoke cartridges to name a few. More recently, electro muscular incapacitation ammunition has been developed that shoots an electronic projectile which delivers a high voltage, low amperage shock that immobilizes an individual upon impact.

The projectiles used in a non-lethal launcher vary in weight and size. Most launchers use a preset pressure or charge to deliver a desired type of projectile at a safe velocity. Some pneumatic launchers have adjustable regulators that allow the launchers to be set up prior to use for a specific velocity of the projectile. In gun powder-based launchers the ammunition must be exchanged to provide a different velocity for the projectile.

In actual use, multiple targets are often presented to the operator. The targets may be a fixed area, object or an individual within the launcher's recommended range. Sometimes, the target may be outside the launcher's recommended range. If the target is moving, it may also be advancing or retreating from the operator. Sometimes, the operator may be moving towards or away from the target area or the target. In each instance, the operator must quickly identify the target, determine if it is fixed or moving, and then determine if the target is within a safe range for firing the launcher.

When controlling a crowd, operators may have to shoot different projectiles at different ranges. If each launcher is setup for use with one type of projectile or velocity, a single launcher cannot be used without injuring the target. The system allows the operator to adjust the velocity for each individual shot without the need to raise or lower the pressure, vent gas away from the projectile, or exchange ammunition. Incorporated with a laser or acoustic range finder, the system becomes automated based on range to target.

Other variable velocity weapon systems that have used laser range finders have previously been limited by their high cost of operation due to elaborate gas metering or use of gun powder.

What is needed is a pneumatic launcher system that allows an operator to easily and quickly control the muzzle velocity of projectiles and enabling projectiles of different types and weights to be safely delivered to a desired target or target area.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a projectile delivery system that includes a pneumatic launcher apparatus for launching projectiles that addresses the problems described above.

More specifically, the system comprises a launcher with at least one round chamber capable of being filled with a projectile. In other embodiments, the launcher is configured to repeatedly position a plurality of projectiles into a discharge position. The launcher includes a main tube containing a closed ballast chamber filled with pressurized air from an external pressurized air source. Located adjacent to the main tube is a set of valve plates and a velocity housing. Mounted or formed on the velocity housing is an external air fitting that connects to an external pressurized air source. Air conduits extend from the velocity housing to the ballast chamber to fill the ballast chamber with pressurized air.

The two valve plates are located in front of a piston sleeve. Extending longitudinally through the piston sleeve and through the two valve plates is a piston rod. The proximal end of the piston rod extends into the valve housing and the distal end of the piston rod extends into the ballast chamber. After assembly, the middle section of the piston rod extends through a firing chamber. Attached to the middle section of the piston rod is a firing piston. The proximal end of the piston rod extends into the velocity housing and interconnects with a velocity valve that includes a stop guide and stop key. A movable stop ring is mounted on the outer surface of the valve housing that controls the position of the stop guide and the movement of a piston rod.

When external pressurized air source is connected to the fitting, pressurized air is delivered to the valve housing and then bled to the ballast chamber. The user manually adjusts or the system automatically adjusts the velocity valve to control the longitudinal movement of the piston rod and the amount of pressurized air delivered to the discharge chamber containing the projectile. When the trigger is activated, a portion of the air from the ballast chamber is delivered to the firing chamber. The firing piston located inside the firing chamber has a larger surface area than the ballast piston causing the piston rod to move longitudinally forward and release air from the ballast chamber. In one embodiment, pressurized air from the ballast chamber is released into an intermediate conduit and eventually flows into the discharge chamber in the barrel and forces the projectile out of the muzzle.

In one embodiment, the launcher is a revolver that includes an index assembly that includes a linear actuator that uses a portion of the pressurized air initially released from the ballast chamber to force the linear actuator to move to an extended position and then automatically retract to its original position while indexing the revolving cylinder.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the pneumatic launcher in an extended position.

FIG. **2** is a perspective view of the pneumatic launcher in a retracted position.

FIG. **3** is a front elevational view of the pneumatic launcher with the front cover plate removed.

FIG. **4** is a sectional side elevational view of the pneumatic launcher.

FIG. **5** is a top plane view of the pneumatic launcher.

FIG. **6** is a rear elevational view of the pneumatic launcher.

FIG. **7** is a front elevational view of the pneumatic launcher.

FIG. **8** is an exploded, partial perspective view showing the velocity housing, the stop key, stop guide, piston sleeve, firing piston, piston rod, valve plates, ballast piston and the main tube.

FIG. **9** is an exploded, partial perspective view of the main tube, the rear cover plate, the cylindrical drum, the cylindrical sleeve, and the front cover plate.

FIG. **10** is a sectional side elevational view of the proximal end of the pneumatic launcher showing the ballast piston in an open position.

FIG. **11** is a sectional side elevational view of the proximal end of the pneumatic launcher showing the ballast piston in a closed position.

FIG. **12** is an exploded perspective view of the index assembly.

FIG. **13** is a perspective view of the cylindrical drum.

FIG. **14** is a rear elevational view of the slide body.

FIG. **15** is a sectional side elevational view of the slide body taken along line **15-15** in FIG. **14**.

FIG. **16** is a top plan view of the slide body.

FIG. **17** is a side elevational view of the hand grip.

FIG. **18** is a perspective view of the trigger.

FIG. **19** is a perspective view of the index spring retainer.

FIG. **20** is a side elevational view of the main tube showing a longitudinally aligned keyway formed on the outer surface.

FIG. **21** is a sectional side elevational view of the main tube shown in FIG. **20** showing the ballast chamber and the end plug threads.

FIG. **22** is an exploded perspective view of the pneumatic launcher

FIG. **23** is an exploded perspective view of the proximal end of the pneumatic launcher.

FIG. **24** is an exploded perspective view of the middle section of the pneumatic launcher.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

Referring to the FIGS. **1-24**, there is shown a variable velocity pneumatic launcher **10** that includes a cylinder drum **20** with a plurality of round chambers **22** each capable of being filled with a projectile **500**. The cylinder drum **20** is configured to slide longitudinally over a fixed main tube **40** with an internal ballast chamber **44** formed near its proximal end filled with pressurized air greater than ambient, atmospheric air.

In one embodiment, the front surface of the cylinder drum **20** is attached to a slide body **90** configured to slide freely over a main tube **40**. As shown in FIGS. **9** and **13**, the cylinder drum **20** includes a center bore **23** that receives an inner cylinder sleeve **49** affixed to a slide body **90**. During assembly, the main body **40** fits into the cylinder sleeve **49**. Formed on the outside side of the main body **40** is at least one keyway **45** that receives a key **97** formed on the slide body **90**, (see FIG. **14**).

Attached to the upper end of the slide body **90** is an optional index assembly **180** that automatically rotates the cylinder drum **20** after each shot and also positions the next round chamber **22** containing a projectile **500** into an upper position longitudinally aligned with the longitudinal axis of the barrel **400**. A barrel **400** is affixed to the slide body **90** and extends through a barrel opening **92** formed on the slide body **90**. As shown in FIGS. **14-16**, the slide body **90** includes a lower main tube opening **94** that allows the cylinder drum **20** and the slide body **90** to slide as a unit longitudinally over the fixed main tube **40** during operation.

As also shown in FIG. **9**, mounted over the opposite ends of the cylinder drum **20** is a front cover plate **26** and an optional rear cover plate **28**. The front cover plate **26** is attached to the rear surface of the slide body **90** and the rear cover plate **28**, when used, is attached to the first valve plate **32**. When the launcher **10** is closed, the first valve plate **32** and a second valve plate **36** are aligned parallel and positioned over the top surface of a hand grip **150** located behind the cylinder drum **20** as shown in FIGS. **10** and **11**.

The proximal end of the main tube **40** connects to the front surface of the first valve plate **32** and extends longitudinally through central bores **27**, **29** formed on the front and rear cover plates **26**, **28**, and through the cylinder sleeve **49**, respectively. As shown in FIG. **8**, the main tube **40** includes a wide receiver neck **42** that attaches to the front surface of the first valve plate **32**. The main tube **40** is hollow with a sealing end plug **149** (see FIG. **12**) attached to internal threads **46** formed near the distal end. The inner area extending from the receiver neck **42** opposite the end plug **149** is a ballast chamber **50**. Formed inside the wide inner space inside the receiver neck **42** is a ballast piston **60**. The receiver neck **42** includes a short bore section **43**A and a short wide bore section **43**B. The ballast piston **60** is a conical-shaped object shown in FIGS. **10** and **11** with diverging end walls and an outer o-ring **63** that press against the inside surface of the short bore section **43**A to seal off the ballast chamber **50**. The ballast chamber **50** is formed inside the main tube **40** and closed off at one end by the end plug **46** and at the opposite end by the ballast piston **60** as shown in FIG. **20**.

Mounted on the top of the hand grip **150** and rearward from the piston sleeve **70** is a velocity housing **80** as shown in FIG. **8**. Formed inside the velocity housing **80** is a first inner valve cavity **81**A, (see FIG. **10**). Located inside the first inner valve cavity **81**A is a velocity valve **125** that includes a stop guide **126** and stop key **128** discussed further below. Mounted or formed on the rear external surface of the velocity housing **80** is an external air pressure fitting **650**. The fitting **650** communicates with the second inner valve cavity **81**B. Also, formed on the velocity housing **80** is a gauge port **88** that connects to an optional air pressure gauge **800**. Formed on the velocity housing **80** is at least one longitudinally aligned air conduit **82** that communicates with the second valve cavity **81**B and with an air conduit **72** formed on the piston sleeve **70**. The air conduit **72** terminates in a cavity that holds a poppet valve **154** located in the hand grip **150**. Located in the distal end of the main body **40** is an air conduit **49** that extends between the ballast chamber **50** and the poppet valve cavity that holds the poppet valve **154**.

Extending longitudinally from the velocity housing **80** through the piston sleeve **70**, through the two valve plates **32**, **36** and into the ballast chamber **50** in the main tube **40** is a piston rod **120**. As shown in FIG. **10**, the rear valve plate **36** includes an air conduit **136** that communicates with the air conduit **72** in the piston sleeve **70**. The proximal end of the piston rod **120** is disposed inside the valve cavity **81** and connects to the stop key **128**. Mounted on the outer surface of the velocity housing **80** is an outer, semi-circular stop ring **124**, (see FIG. **22**). Located inside the velocity housing **80** is the stop guide **126** and the stop key **128**. The rear valve plate **36** also includes an optional bore with a polycarbonate window **320** inserted therein. During use, the user may view through the window **320** see inside the chamber **22** to determine if a projectile **500** is inside the chamber **22** when operating the launcher **10**.

The stop ring **124** is a semi-circular structure positioned over a semi-circular slot **82** formed on the outer surface of the velocity housing **80**. The stop guide **126** and the stop key **128** are located inside the velocity housing **80**. The stop ring **124** is configured to move transversely or side-to-side inside a transversely aligned slot **82** formed on the velocity housing **80**. Formed or attached to the bottom surface of the stop ring **124** is a downward extending leg **125**. During assembly, a

threaded bolt **130** is extended through a bore formed on the velocity housing **80** that extends through the extending leg **125**.

Located inside the longitudinally aligned bore **81** formed in the velocity housing **80** and below the stop ring **124** is the cylindrical stop guide **126**. Formed on the inside surface of the stop guide **126** are platforms **127** (see FIG. **23**) configured to selectively engage two arms **129** located on the stop key **128** that is coaxially aligned and disposed inside the stop ring **124**. The stop key **128** fits inside the center bore formed on the stop guide **126**. The stop key **128** is mounted in a fixed position on the proximal end of the piston rod **120**. During operation, the stop guide **126** is connected to the threaded bolt **130** that extends downward from the stop ring **124**. When the stop ring **124** is moved laterally over the velocity housing **80**, the stop guide **126** rotates over the stop key **128**. The rotational movements of the platforms **127** relative to the arms **129** on the stop key **128** control the longitudinal movement of the piston rod **120** and the longitudinal movement of the ballast piston **60**.

As state above, the piston sleeve **70** includes a center bore **73** through which the piston rod **120** extends and rotates and slides freely. Formed inside the piston sleeve **70** is piston cavity **74** in which the firing piston **140** is disposed. The firing piston **140** includes internal threads **142** that mesh with external threads **121** formed on the middle region of the piston rod **120** that enables the firing piston **140** to be locked in a fixed position on the piston rod **120**. An o-ring **143** is attached to the outer perimeter of the firing piston **140** to create a sealed enclosed firing chamber **74** against the inside surface of the piston sleeve **70**.

The piston rod **120** extends forward from the firing piston **140** through bores **33**, **37** formed on the first and second valve plates **32**, **36**, respectively. Formed inside the bore **33** formed on the first valve plate **32** is an aligned neck **34** that co-axially aligns the piston rod **120** with the center axis of the main tube **40**.

The distal end of the piston rod **120** is connected to a threaded bore **61** formed on the end surface of the ballast piston **60** disposed inside the ballast chamber **50** formed on the main tube **40**. During operation, the ballast chamber **50** is filled with pressurized air (approx. 300 psi and the ballast piston **60** is automatically forced rearward closing the ballast chamber **50**.

The index assembly **160** is attached to the slide body **90** and supported over the main tube **40**. The index assembly **160** includes a hollow index tube **165** and an index rod **170** and an index slider **190**. During operation, the index slider **190** slides longitudinally back and forth over the index tube **165** and the index rod **170**.

The index assembly **160** also includes a spring biased pin **172** that extends downward and engages spiral grooves **222** and slots **224** formed on the side of the cylinder drum **20**. The spiral grooves **222** and slots **224** extend continuous over the outside surface of the cylinder drum **20**. When the index assembly **160** slides forward, the pin **172** is forcibly pressed downward against a spiral grooves **222** causing the cylinder drum **20** to rotate in a clockwise direction to position the next adjacent chamber on the cylinder drum **20** in a discharge position and in alignment with the barrel **400**. The slots **224** allow the cylinder drum **20** to slide longitudinally.

The hand grip **150** includes a trigger **152** coupled to a poppet valve **154**. When the trigger **152** is pulled, the poppet valve **154** causes a portion of the pressurized air in the ballast chamber **50** to escape and flow into the firing chamber **74**.

A 3,000-4500 PSI external air source **700** is connected to an external air fitting **650** formed on the velocity housing **80**. The air source **700** includes a regulator that lowers the air pressure to approximately 300 psi. The pressurized air follows air conduits **82**, **72** and **136** formed in the velocity housing **80**, the piston sleeve **70** and the first valve plate **32**, respectively. The pressurized air is delivered to the poppet valve cavity and then to the ballast chamber **50**. When the pressurized air is delivered to the ballast chamber **50**, the ballast piston **60** is forced rearward against the narrow inside bore **43**A formed on the distal end of the main tube **40**.

The firing piston **140** located inside the firing chamber **74** located inside the piston sleeve **70** has a surface area larger than the surface area of the ballast piston **60**. When the poppet valve **154** is opened, pressurized air is delivered to the firing chamber **74** causing the firing piston **140** to move longitudinally inside the firing chamber **74**. Because the firing piston **140** is affixed to the piston rod **120**, adding pressurized air to the firing chamber **74** causes the piston rod **120** to move longitudinally forward through the two valve plates **32**, **36** and the main tube **40**. The force exerted by the piston rod **120** overcomes the air pressure inside the ballast chamber **50** causing the ballast piston **60** to move forward and allow pressurized air to escape and flow around the ballast piston **60** and into an interior cavity **35** formed on the front valve plate **32**, The interior cavity **35** includes a bore **36** that communicates with the upper chamber **22** in the cylinder drum **20** containing a projectile **500** forcing the projectile **500** from the barrel **400**. How far the ballast piston **60** opens controls the amount of pressurized air released from the ballast chamber **50**. If the ballast piston **60** is forced open entirely, substantially all of the pressurize air is released into the upper chamber **22** and the projectile **500** exits the barrel **400** at its maximum velocity. If the ballast piston **60** is partially opened, then a reduced amount of pressurized air is released into the upper chamber **22** and the projectile **500** exits the barrel **400** at a lower velocity.

When the trigger **152** is released, the trigger plunger **153** is extended which allows pressurized air inside the firing chamber **140** to travel through one or more air conduits **159** formed in the piston sleeve **70** and terminates in the poppet valve cavity in the hand grip **150**. Air from the firing chamber **140** escapes into the atmosphere.

As mentioned above, the launcher **10** may include an optional index assembly **160** that causes a cylinder drum **20** to automatically rotate so the upper chamber is aligned with the barrel **400**. The index assembly **160** is coupled to the ballast chamber **50** so pressurized air is used to impart movement of the cylindrical drum **20**.

More specifically, pressurized air is delivered to the index tube **165** and is released into an air piston cylinder **290** which causes the indexing slider **190** to move backwards over the index tube **165** and index rod **170**. The index assembly **160** includes an index cover **180** that covers the index tube **165** and the index rod **170**. The distal ends of the index tube **165**, the index rod **170** and the cylinder **290** are attached to an index end cap **198**. The index cover **160** is attached to the slide body **90**. Located under the index cover **180** is a spring biased index pin **187** connected to an index slider **190**. Connected to the index slider **190** is an index lever **192** and an index handle **194**. When pressurized air is delivered to the index tube **165**, the index slider **190** is forced backwards over the index tube **165** and index rod **170**. The index lever **192**, the index handle **194** and the index spring **196** forces the pin downward which causes the cylinder drum **20** to rotate 60 degrees upon return so that the next chamber is aligned with the barrel **400**.

In the embodiment described above and shown in the Figures, the user manually manipulates the stop ring **124** to adjust the movement of the piston rod **120** during operation It should be understood that an alternative mechanical component, such as an electric motor coupled to a laser range finder **900** may be attached to the velocity housing **80** that automatically adjusts the velocity valve according to the distance to the target.

In compliance with the statute, the invention described has been described in language more or less specific as to structural features. It should be understood however, that the invention is not limited to the specific features shown, since the means and construction shown, comprises the preferred embodiments for putting the invention into effect. The invention is therefore claimed in its forms or modifications within the legitimate and valid scope of the amended claims, appropriately interpreted under the doctrine of equivalents.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

This invention has application in the military and law enforcement industries and more specifically, to crowd control tactics.

I claim:

1. A pneumatic launcher, comprising:

a. a barrel;

b. at least one round chamber filled with a projectile and longitudinally aligned with said barrel;

c. a ballast chamber;

d. a ballast piston located inside said ballast chamber, said ballast piston configured to close said ballast chamber when said ballast chamber is filled with pressurized air greater than ambient air pressure;

e. a piston sleeve, said piston sleeve including a firing chamber and a firing piston located inside said firing chamber;

f. a velocity housing attached to said piston sleeve, said velocity housing includes a valve cavity;

g. a trigger;

h a poppet valve coupled to said trigger;

i a piston rod extending longitudinally from said valve cavity, into said firing chamber in said piston sleeve and into said ballast chamber, said piston rod affixed to said firing piston and affixed to said ballast piston so that when said piston rod moves longitudinally, said firing piston and said ballast piston move simultaneous and allows pressurized air to flow from said ballast chamber and into said round chamber;

j. an adjustable velocity valve located inside said velocity cavity and coupled to said piston rod that selectively controls the longitudinal movement of said piston rod and the movement of said ballast piston and said firing piston;

k. at least one air conduit extending between said poppet valve and said firing chamber;

l. an air pressure source connected to said ballast chamber, and,

m. an air pressure source attached to said poppet valve.

2. The launcher, as recited in claim **1**, wherein said adjustable velocity valve includes a stop ring mounted on said velocity housing, a stop guide located inside said valve cavity and attached to said stop ring and a stop key affixed to said piston rod, said stop key selectively engages said stop guide to control the longitudinal movement of said piston rod.

3. The launcher as recited in claim **1**, further including a main tube and a rotating cylinder drum disposed around said main tube, said cylinder drum containing a plurality of chambers each configured to hold a projectile.

4. The launcher as recited in claim **3**, further including an index assembly that automatically rotates said cylinder drum over said main tube to position a chamber containing a projectile in alignment with said barrel.

5. The launcher, as recited in claim **4**, wherein said index assembly includes an index tube and an index rod located above said cylinder drum, said index tube being coupled to said trigger and said valve cavity to receive pressurized air that forces said cylinder drum longitudinally over said main tube.

6. The launcher, as recited in claim **5**, further including a plurality of interconnected spiral grooves formed on an external surface of said cylinder drum and a biased index lever configured to engage said spiral groove.

7. The launcher, as recited in claim **1**, further including a viewing window formed on said valve plate that enables a user to see a projectile inside said chamber.

8. The launcher, as recited in claim **3**, further including a slide body attached to said cylinder drum.

9. The launcher, as recited in claim **8**, further including an index assembly that automatically rotates said cylinder drum over said main tube to position a chamber containing a projectile in alignment with said barrel.

10. The launcher, as recited in claim **9**, wherein said index assembly includes an index tube and an index rod located above said cylinder drum, said index tube being coupled to said trigger and said valve cavity to receive pressurized air that forces said cylinder drum longitudinally over said main tube.

11. The launcher, as recited in claim **10**, further including a plurality of interconnected spiral grooves formed on an external surface of said cylinder drum and a biased index lever configured to engage said spiral groove.

12. The launcher, as recited in claim **8**, further including a viewing window formed on said valve plate that enables a user to see a projectile inside said chamber adjacent to said valve plate.

13. A launcher, comprising:

a. a barrel with an open end;

b. a ballast chamber with a closed end and a short bore section at the opposite end; said ballast chamber filled with pressurized air when said short bore section is closed;

c. a conduit extending between said short bore section on said ballast chamber;

d. a firing chamber with a conduit that connects to said ballast chamber;

e. a piston rod that extends between said ballast chamber, through said firing chamber;

f. a ballast piston attached to said piston rod and disposed inside said ballast chamber, said ballast piston has a surface area configured to close said short bore section in said ballast chamber when said ballast chamber is filled with pressurized air;

g. a firing piston attached to said piston rod and located inside said firing chamber, said firing piston has a surface area larger than said surface area on said ballast piston;

h. a velocity valve attached to said piston rod, said velocity valve configured to be set at different flow settings that limit the amount of longitudinal movement of said piston rod in said ballast chamber and thereby controlling the position of said ballast piston to partially or fully open said short bore section;

i. a pressurized air source,

j. a trigger coupled to said pressurized air source and said firing chamber, said trigger configured to selectively control the flow of pressurized air from said pressurized air source to said firing chamber;

k. whereby when said velocity valve is adjusted to a desired setting and said trigger is activated, said pressurized air from said pressurized air source flows into said firing chamber and against said firing piston causing said piston rod to move longitudinally inside said ballast chamber the desired distance according to said setting and selectively open said short bore section and allow said pressurized air inside said ballast chamber to flow into said barrel and forcing a projectile located inside said barrel through said open end of said barrel.

14. The launcher, as recited in claim **1**, wherein said velocity valve includes a velocity housing and a stop ring and a stop guide located inside said velocity housing, said stop guide and a stop key affixed to said piston rod, said stop key selectively engages said stop guide to control the longitudinally movement of said piston rod.

15. The launcher as recited in claim **1**, further including a rotating cylinder drum containing a plurality of chambers each configured to hold a projectile.

16. The launcher as recited in claim **15**, further including an index assembly that automatically rotates said cylinder drum chamber containing a projectile in alignment with said barrel.

17. The launcher, as recited in claim **16**, wherein said index assembly includes an index tube and an index rod located above said cylinder drum, said index tube being coupled to said trigger.

18. The launcher, as recited in claim **5**, further including a plurality of interconnected spiral grooves formed on an external surface of said cylinder drum and a biased index lever configured to engage said spiral groove.

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